

Disaster CalFresh Policy

Hosted by the California Department of Social Services

CalFresh and Nutrition Branch, Policy Bureau

Monday, October 23, 2017

Introduction

- ▶ Pursuant to the recent Presidential disaster declaration for individual assistance for Butte, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, Sonoma and Yuba Counties (the “wildfire impacted counties”), California was approved to operate Disaster CalFresh to serve individuals and families impacted by wildfires in those seven counties.
- ▶ California will operate D-CalFresh in the seven wildfire impacted counties of Butte, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, Sonoma, and Yuba. California will process D-CalFresh applications and determine eligibility in these seven counties.
- ▶ When D-CalFresh eligible individuals and families have been displaced to other counties, those counties’ eligibility workers will be available to assist clients.

Today's Agenda

- ▶ D-CalFresh Overview
- ▶ D-CalFresh Application and Benefit Period
- ▶ D-CalFresh vs. Supplemental CalFresh Benefits
- ▶ Household Composition
- ▶ Eligibility Basics
- ▶ Verification Basics
- ▶ Question and Answer

What is D-CalFresh?

- ▶ D-CalFresh provides temporary food assistance for households affected by natural disaster. D-CalFresh provides one month of benefits to eligible disaster survivors and can facilitate the issuance of supplemental CalFresh benefits for ongoing households.
- ▶ An affected area must have received a Presidential Declaration of “Major Disaster” with Individual Assistance in order to request to operate D-CalFresh.
- ▶ D-CalFresh timing varies with the unique circumstances of each disaster, but always begins when commercial channels of food distribution have been restored and individuals and families are able to purchase and prepare food.

D-CalFresh Application Period

► D-CalFresh Application Period

- Butte, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, Yuba Counties:
 - Wednesday, October 25 through Saturday, October 28
 - Monday, October 29 through Wednesday, November 1
 - 7 Day Application Period
- Sonoma County:
 - Wednesday, October 25 through Wednesday November 1
 - 8 Day Application Period

► D-CalFresh Pre-Registration

D-CalFresh Benefit Period

- ▶ October 8, 2017 through November 7, 2017
 - 30 day benefit period
 - The benefit period is the period during which disaster-related expenses may be counted and the start date used to determine household composition and resources. Only income, resources and expenses during the benefit period are considered in determining D-CalFresh eligibility.

D-CalFresh vs. Supplemental CalFresh

- ▶ Supplements bring ongoing CalFresh households impacted by the disaster up to the maximum allotment for their household size.
 - Ongoing CalFresh households need not appear in person at a D-CalFresh application site in order to receive individual or automatic supplements.
 - Ongoing CalFresh households do not need to complete a D-CalFresh face-to-face interview to receive supplemental CalFresh benefits.
- ▶ Individual vs. Automatic
 - Individual supplements: based on household request.
 - Automatic supplements: based on data indicating majority of households in specific zip codes were affected by the disaster.

Individual Requests for Supplemental CalFresh Benefits

- ▶ Ongoing CalFresh households must complete either the CF 385, *Replacement/Supplement Affidavit/Authorization* (CF 303), or equivalent form, to request supplemental CalFresh benefits.
- ▶ A supplement affidavit may be accepted in person, online, over the phone, or by mail, so long as the initial request for supplemental benefits is made during the D-CalFresh application period.
- ▶ If requests are being accepted by phone or through the mail, the wildfire impacted county must provide the client with a reasonable timeframe (i.e. 10 days) to return or mail the affidavit.
- ▶ The supplement may be processed outside of the D-CalFresh application period only if the supplement was initially requested during the D-CalFresh application period.

D-CalFresh Household Composition

- ▶ Household composition is established as of the date of the disaster. In this case, October 8, 2017.
- ▶ A D-CalFresh household
 - Includes those people living together, purchasing and preparing food together at the time of the disaster.
 - Does not include those people with whom applicants are temporarily staying with due to the disaster.
 - May include an individual(s) who had been excluded from an ongoing CalFresh household at the time of the disaster.

- ▶ New D-CalFresh applicants must complete the *Application for Disaster CalFresh* (CF 385).
- ▶ All CWDs statewide must ensure that the CF 385 is readily available during the D-CalFresh application period. The D-CalFresh application must be submitted during the D-CalFresh application period to receive D-CalFresh or supplemental CalFresh benefits.
- ▶ The D-CalFresh application may be signed using electronic signature if this option is available in the wildfire impacted county.
- ▶ Due to the limited D-CalFresh application period, D-CalFresh applications will not be accepted through the mail. D-CalFresh applications must be submitted online or in-person.

CF 385 Available in English & Spanish

D-CalFresh Eligibility

- ▶ To be eligible for D-CalFresh, an applicant household must first meet the basic criteria, including:
 - Residing or working in the disaster area at the time of the disaster;
 - Purchasing or planning to purchase food during the benefit period;
 - Experiencing an adverse effect due to the disaster.
- ▶ Households meeting the basic eligibility criteria will then be measured against the D-CalFresh income limits in order to determine eligibility. The FY 2018 D-CalFresh income limited and allotments by household size were released by [ACIN I-61-17](#) on September 20, 2017.

D-CalFresh Eligibility

► Residency

- The household must have lived or worked in the disaster area, one of the seven wildfire impacted counties, at the time of the disaster (i.e. October 8, 2017).

► Purchase Food

- The household must plan on purchasing food during the disaster period, October 8, 2017 through November 7, 2017. This will likely apply to the majority of households.

► Adverse Affects

- Disaster related adverse effects fall into three categories: loss of income, inaccessible resources, and disaster expenses. The household must have experienced one in order to be eligible for D-CalFresh.

Disaster Gross Income Limit (DGIL)

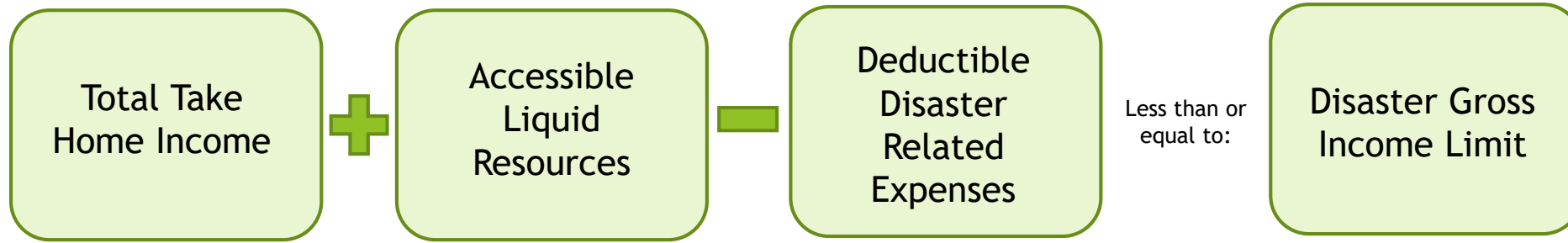
- ▶ Unlike regular CalFresh, which includes separate test for income and resources, D-CalFresh groups income and resources together under one test.
- ▶ The household's take-home income received (or expected to be received) during the benefit period plus its accessible liquid resources minus disaster related expenses (unreimbursed disaster related expenses paid or anticipated to be paid out of pocket during the disaster benefit period) shall not exceed the DGIL.

ACIN I-61-17

**D-SNAP Income Eligibility Standards and Allotments FY 2018
for 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia**

Household Size	Disaster Gross Income Limit	Maximum Allotment
1	\$1,700	\$192
2	\$2,049	\$352
3	\$2,397	\$504
4	\$2,755	\$640
5	\$3,133	\$760
6	\$3,510	\$913
7	\$3,858	\$1,009
8	\$4,207	\$1,153
Each Additional Member	+\$349	+\$144

Disaster Gross Income Limit (DGIL)



Disaster Gross Income Limit (DGIL)

► Income

- Total take home pay of household members

► Accessible Liquid Resources

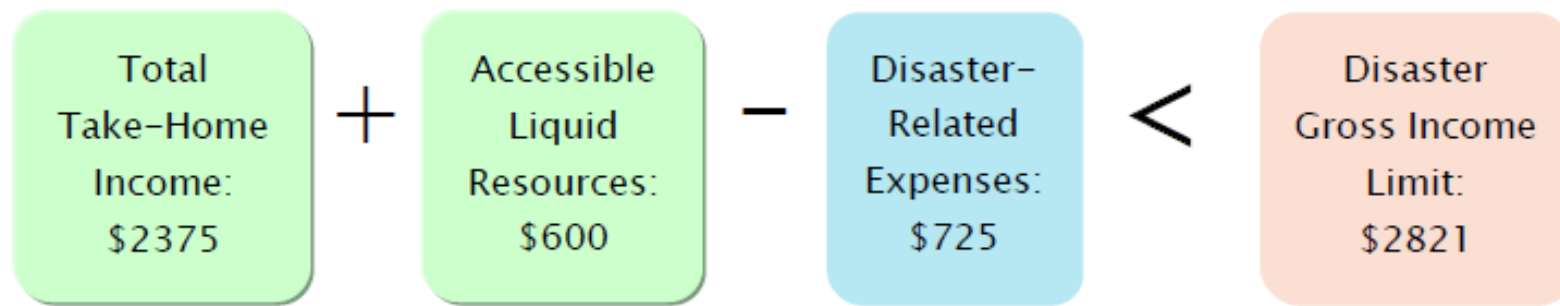
- Cash on hand and funds in accessible checking and saving accounts on the first day of the disaster benefit period.

► Deductible Disaster Related Expenses

- Expenses the household has paid or expects to pay out-of-pocket during the disaster benefit period.
- Does not include expenses which the household has been or expects to be reimbursed for within the disaster benefit period.
- Does not include expenses which have been incurred, but will not be paid for within the disaster benefit period.

Example: Joan's car was damaged in the disaster and the total cost of the repair is \$700. Joan's insurance covers \$500 and she will pay \$200 out of pocket to have it repaired so she can continue to go to work. The full cost is not counted for D-SNAP purposes; only the \$200 Joan paid is considered a deductible expense. Laura and Joan's home was also damaged and repairs will cost \$3000 in total; they've paid \$400 out of pocket so far. They have not yet received FEMA assistance or reimbursement from their home owners insurance and do not anticipate receiving those payments until after the benefit period ends. They also lost \$125 worth of food due to the extended power outage following the disaster. In total, their deductible disaster-related expenses are: $\$200 + \$400 + \$125 = \725 .

Figure 5: Calculating the Smith Family's D-SNAP Eligibility



Key Eligibility Questions

- ▶ Did the household live or work in the disaster area when the disaster struck?
- ▶ Does the household plan to purchase food?
- ▶ Did the household experience a disaster related loss of income or disaster related expense that will not be reimbursed during the benefit period?
- ▶ Does the household meet the disaster income and resources test (i.e. DGIL)?

D-CalFresh Interview

- ▶ CWDs must conduct a face-to-face interview with all new D-CalFresh applicants prior to certifying the households for benefits.
- ▶ The date of application submission, not the date of the interview, is considered the application filing date. The filing date is the start of the 3 day period in which benefits must be issued if the household is determined eligible.

D-CalFresh Verification

- ▶ Verification rules are eased during a disaster. Eligibility staff should exercise reasonable judgement when evaluating the accuracy of applicant statements. D-CalFresh verification requirements are three:
 - Identity must be verified;
 - Residency and loss/inaccessibility of income or liquid resources should be verified where possible; and
 - Household composition and food loss can be verified if questionable.

Duplicate Participation

- ▶ CWDs are required to screen for duplicate participation
 - Households may not receive D-CalFresh and regular CalFresh at the same time.
 - Households may only be approved for D-CalFresh once during the benefit period.
 - Approved D-CalFresh and denied D-CalFresh household should not overlap.
- ▶ CWDs will reference the SAWS and MEDS to determine duplicate participation before completing the D-CalFresh eligibility determination.

D-CalFresh Allotment

- ▶ D-CalFresh provides a full month's allotment to households who would not normally qualify for or participate in CalFresh.
- ▶ The allotment is equal to the maximum monthly allotment for the household size provided under regular CalFresh.

ACIN I-61-17

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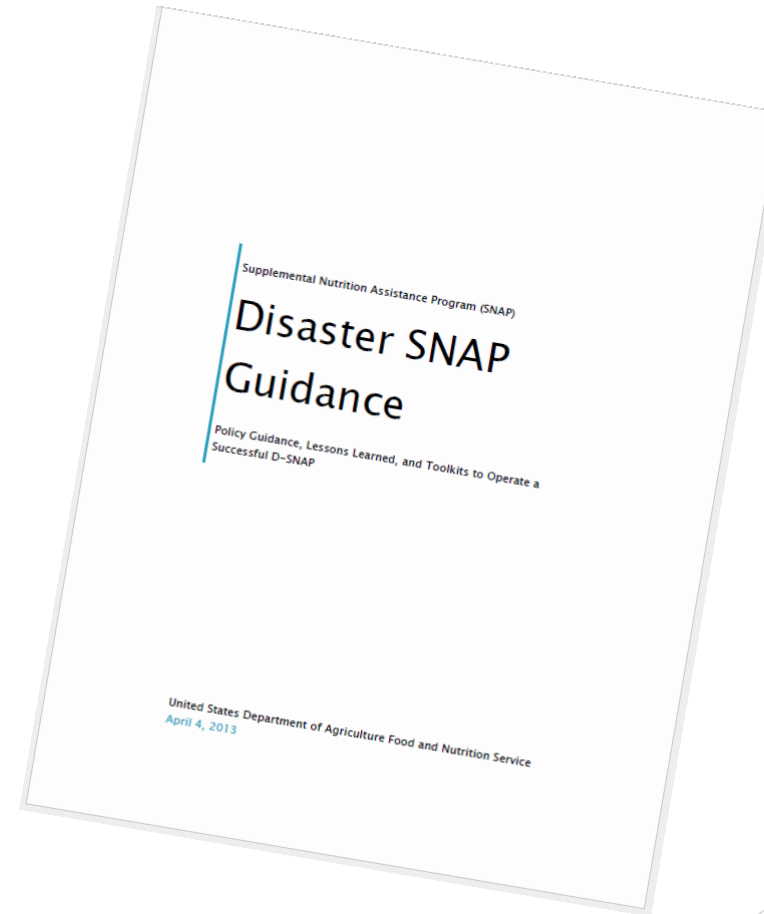
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Benefit Issuance

- ▶ D-CalFresh benefits can be issued on a regular EBT card; special EBT cards only required when application site conditions constrain access to printing/PIN equipment.
- ▶ Certified households should be able to access their benefits within 3 days of application (except in cases of delayed issuance for questionable applications).

D-SNAP Guidance

- ▶ A must read for detailed guidance regarding Disaster SNAP policy, including eligibility and implementation of the program overall.



Questions & Answers

More Questions?

D-CalFresh Q&A Session with CalFresh Policy & Operations

Tuesday, October 24, 11:15am to 12:15pm

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